

ESTILL COUNTY FARM SCOOP

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

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Container Gardening

Source: Jamie Dockery

Not everyone has acreage or land where they can just dig in the soil. As long as you have a sunny spot, whether it be a balcony or parking lot, if you can get sunlight, you can grow flowers or vegetables in containers. It isn't difficult. Just about any container will do, but the smaller the container, you will be more of a slave to it. Unless you work from home, are a stay at home parent, or retired, small containers do not make any sense. Don't use anything smaller than half of a bourbon barrel, 24 inches in diameter, if you are going to grow tomato plants. The more soil you can give that plant, relative to its size, the less water and maintenance you will have to do. You can grow anything in a container, but remember, the larger the plant the more challenging it is. Lettuce, radishes and plants that don't grow tall, and don't require a lot of water, are very easy to grow in containers. There is no denying, plants in containers depend on you for everything. Generally, watering is a daily chore and if you let plants dry out and become stressed, you will limit how much they can produce. Being in containers, plants don't have access to the nutrients in natural soil, which is usually a

potting soil or soil mix. You have the commitment of feeding or fertilizing on a regular basis. Young people are very interested in horticulture right now. They usually live in apartments before owning a home, and that makes container gardening a perfect fit. Containers can be of any size or shape. Container gardens are elevated and do not contain native soil. Raised beds require much less watering than container gardening. One of the most popular questions at extension offices concerning container gardening is about blossom end rot, which is associated with tomatoes, and is technically a calcium deficiency. Blossom end rot is actually the lack of consistent watering, making it hard to grow a full-sized tomato in a container without running into issues. Plant breeders have gotten around that by developing container-bred varieties which are much shorter plants. Dwarf tomato plants get about two feet tall and need only about a third of the water that a full-size tomato plant requires. There are a multitude of varieties of other vegetables that are bred for container gardening.

June

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Installing a butterfly garden

Source: Faye Kuosman, UK extension horticulture agent

Honeybees, which are native to Europe and introduced to the United States, are important pollinators for home gardens. But numerous pollinator species including native bees, butterflies and moths, beetles, birds and bats benefit our gardens. Sadly, many of the pollinators have suffered from habitat loss, chemical misuse, diseases and parasites.

Gardeners play a critical role in the nurturing and conservation of both native and introduced pollinators. Gardens and landscapes provide pollinators with food, water, shelter and habitat to complete their life cycles. Urban areas typically feature large areas of pavement and buildings and offer little in the way of food and shelter for pollinators. Garden plantings can help bridge that gap.

Just like with any new flower bed, you want to pick a site for your butterfly garden with good drainage, full sun, and an area with good weed control. If you are starting a new butterfly garden, get a soil test, eliminate the weeds and add organic matter.

Honeybees and other pollinators need protein from flower pollen and carbohydrates from flower nectar. Plan to provide a variety of different types of flowers, and aim to have three different

flower species in bloom throughout the growing season. Showy, colorful flowers and massed groups of flowers, particularly in small gardens provide efficient feeding stations for the pollinators. Flowering trees and shrubs also provide excellent food sources. Native plants share a long history with their pollinators, including a wide variety of natives will make your garden a favorite destination for pollinators.

You want to have a variety of plants, preferably native ones and non-native that will bloom throughout the growing season. Some of these are purple cone flower, black-eyed susan, asters, golden rod, yarrow, tall blazing star, milkweed, coreopsis and many more. The Kentucky Native Plant Society has an updated listing of nurseries in Kentucky that sell native plants.

Be sure to have puddling spots for butterflies to get a drink of water. Pollinators also need shelter from the wind, scorching sun and heavy rain. Fences can serve as a windbreak, which may make the garden more attractive to pollinators.

Contact Estill County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service for information on starting a butterfly garden..

Table 20.14. Vegetable gardener's calendar with planting dates for Western, Central, and Eastern Kentucky¹

Western Ky	Central Ky	Eastern Ky	Planting Method ²	Crop
Jan. 15	Jan. 22	Jan. 29	I	Onions
Feb. 1	Feb. 8	Feb. 15	I	Brussels sprouts
Feb. 15	Feb. 22	Mar. 1	I	Cole crops (Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi), lettuce, Chinese cabbage
Mar. 1	Mar. 8	Mar. 15	O	Spinach, mustard, beets, peas, edible podded peas
Mar. 15	Mar. 15	Mar. 22	M	Cabbage, kohlrabi
			O	Asparagus and rhubarb (crowns), beets, carrots, collards, kale, mustard, spinach, peas, edible pod-ded peas, early potato seed pieces, radishes, turnips, green onions, onion sets, endive
			I	Peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, sweet potato slips. Dig and divide any 4 year old rhubarb plants. Fertilize asparagus and rhubarb with 1 lb 5 10 10 per 100 sq ft.
Apr. 1	Apr. 8	Apr. 15	M	Broccoli, cauliflower, collards, lettuce, Chinese cabbage, Swiss chard, onions from seeds
			O	Mustard, spinach, radishes, lettuce, Swiss chard
Apr. 5	Apr. 12	Apr. 19	I	Muskmelons, watermelons, squash
			O	Sweet corn, beets, carrots, mustard, spinach, radishes, lettuce
May 1	May 8	May 15	O	Sweet corn, mustard, radishes, lettuce
May 7	May 15	May 22	O	Green beans, lima beans
			M	Tomatoes, muskmelons, watermelons, squash
June 1	June 8	June 15	O	Sweet corn
			M	Sweet potatoes
June 15	June 22	June 29	O	Sweet corn, late potatoes, summer squash, bush beans, lettuce, parsnips, beets, carrots
July 1	July 8	July 15	O	Sweet corn (early maturing variety), carrots, beets
July 10	July 18	July 25	O	Sow seeds of fall cole crops in a nursery area
July 15	July 22	July 29	O	Sweet corn (early maturing variety), kale, mustard, turnips, summer squash
Aug. 1	Aug. 8	Aug. 15	M	Transplant fall cole crops to permanent location between now and Aug. 15
			O	Peas, edible podded peas, bush beans, radishes, beets, mustard. Divide old rhubarb or plant crowns if not done in spring.
Aug. 15	Aug. 22	Aug. 29	O	Radishes, spinach, turnips, turnip greens, beets, mustard, lettuce, endive
Sept. 1	Sept. 8	Sept. 15	O	Radishes, spinach, mustard
Sept. 15	Sept. 22	Sept. 29	O	Radishes, mustard, turnips, turnip greens
Oct. 1	Oct. 8	Oct. 15	O	Radishes
Oct. 15	Oct. 22	Oct. 29	O	Sow sets of Egyptian tree or multiplier onions. Harvest carrots before heavy freeze.
Nov. 1	Nov. 8	Nov. 15	O	Dig parsnips and store at 32-40°F, or mulch parsnips heavily in the ground

¹ Planting dates are approximate, consult you local weather conditions and adjust planting dates accordingly.

² **I:** Start seeds indoors; **M:** Move transplants to garden; **O:** Start seeds outdoors



Copies of ID-128 Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky can be picked up at the Estill County Extension Office!

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ESTILL COUNTY 4-H SEED LIBRARY



LIMIT 10 SEED PACKS PER FAMILY PER WEEK

WILL BE RESTOCKED PERIODICALLY. WILL NOT TAKE REQUESTS. PLEASE SIGN THE SHEET & PUT DOWN NUMBER OF PACKETS TAKEN.

Effective strategies to prevent plant diseases in your garden

Source: Rick Durham, extension professor,
Department of Horticulture

In the unseen sphere of our vegetable gardens, plant pathogens including fungi, bacteria, nematodes and viruses are ever-present threats. However, with proactive measures, gardeners can successfully manage these threats and maintain healthy vegetable gardens.

Selecting the right location for your garden is the first step in prevention. Opt for a sunny area with well-drained soil to discourage the growth of pathogens. Raised beds can be an effective solution for improving drainage and air circulation around plants. It's also crucial to clear out old plant debris, which can harbor diseases from the previous season.

When choosing plants, prioritize disease-resistant varieties and inspect any transplants for signs of disease before introducing them to your garden. For seeds, consider those that have been treated with fungicide to give them a better chance of thriving. Planting in warm soil and ensuring proper spacing between plants are additional measures that can minimize stress and disease susceptibility.

Crop rotation is an invaluable strategy, especially in smaller gardens. Changing what's planted in a specific area every few years can prevent the buildup of soil-borne diseases. For crops that are particularly disease-prone, consider skipping their cultivation for a few years or growing them in containers separate from the garden.

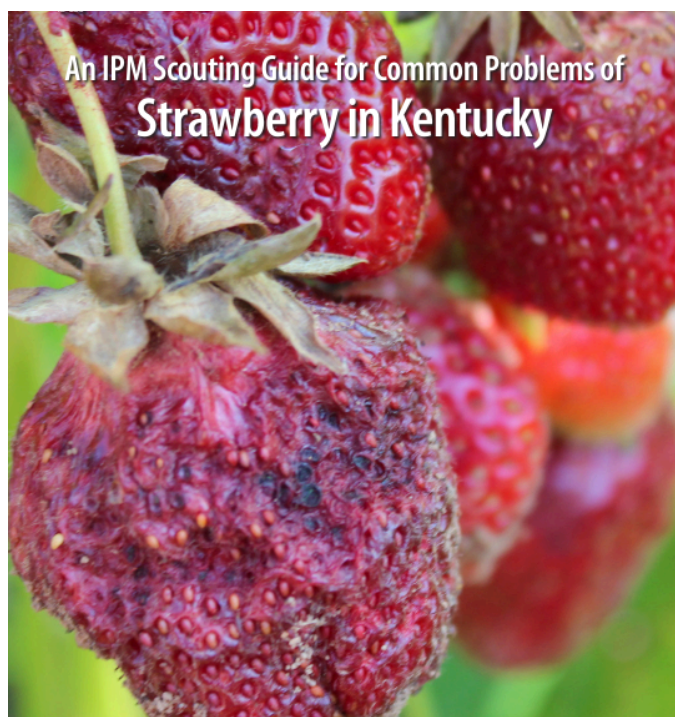
Maintaining a weed-free garden throughout the growing season is essential. Weeds can serve as hosts for pests and diseases, transferring them to your vegetable plants. Proper watering techniques can also make a significant difference; water at the base of plants to avoid wetting foliage, and if overhead watering is necessary, do so early in the day to allow leaves to dry.

Avoiding mechanical injury to plants, such as

from gardening tools or rough handling, can prevent openings for pathogens. Furthermore, refraining from working in the garden when plants are wet can reduce the spread of diseases.

By taking these steps gardeners can effectively manage plant diseases. This approach not only protects the garden from the myriad of pathogens waiting to attack but also leads to a bountiful and healthy harvest.

For more information on keeping a health garden, contact the Estill County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.



IPM scouting guides for many different crops are available at the Estill County Extension Office! These will help you be able to be proactive in managing pests throughout the season.

UK Ag weather updates

Sign up for UK Ag weather updates from our UK Ag Meteorologist Matt Dixon through the link below. You will receive regular updates and explanations related to severe weather that will impact agriculture.

https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/tPVfUuo?source_id=5c58709f-a356-4cc4-a5fd-f32839a00147&source_type=em&c=DglHs3Id_eRAQL2hfLc7TXLPQIm—zSxifrNgp_u5yTu6twAp855yw==

You can also sign up for the new UK Ag Weather Alert App. The new app in the Ag Weather Center was just released on Google Play, making it available for both iOS and Android devices! If a watch or warning is in effect, you'll get a push alert sent straight to your phone. Click the links for installation.

[Apple Store – https://apps.apple.com/us/app/weather-alert-app/id6470309148](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/weather-alert-app/id6470309148)

[Google Play Store – https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.baronweather.weatheralert&pli=1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.baronweather.weatheralert&pli=1)



Forage Timely Tips

- Start hay harvests for quality forage. Consider making baleage to facilitate timely cutting.
- Seed warm season grasses for supplemental forage once soil temperature is at 60 F.
- Clip, graze, or make hay to prevent seedhead formation.
- Rotate pastures as based in height rather than time: TF 8 to 10 / 3 to 4; OG 8 to 10 / 4-5; Bermuda 4 to 6 / 1 to 2; Sorghum Sudangrass 20 to 24 / 8 to 12
- Consider temporary electric fencing to subdivide larger pastures and exclude areas for mechanical harvesting.
- Scout pastures for summer annual weeds and control when small.



Paying attention now can reduce feeding costs later

Last fall UK Forage Specialists and county agents analyzed almost 454 hay samples as part of the Eastern Kentucky Hay Contest. Here is what we found:

- Crude protein (6.1 to 21.9%) and total digestible nutrients (45.7 to 66.3%) varied widely
- 2% of the hay samples contained less than 50% TDN
- 1% of the hay samples contained less than 8% crude protein
- 184 samples or 41% contained enough energy to meet the requirements of a beef cow at peak lactation
- 300 samples or 66% would meet the protein requirements of a beef cow at peak lactation
- 450 samples or 98% contained enough protein to meet the needs of a dry pregnant cow
- 450 samples or 98% contained enough energy to meet the requirements of a dry pregnant cow

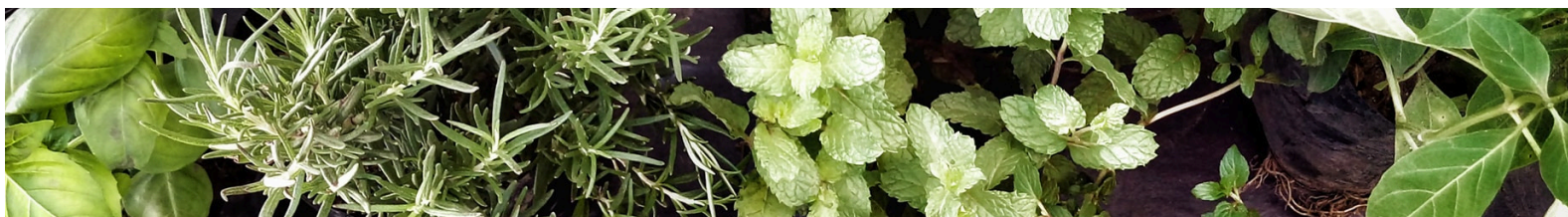
Samples 2023 were better than 2022, but this was probably mostly due to better hay making weather. The biggest take home from the 2023 samples is that we still have a way to go in terms of improving hay quality!

More than 60% of the samples still needed energy supplementation when feeding hay to lactating brood cows and first calf heifers.

So, what don't these results tell us? Since there is still wide variation in both crude protein and energy for the hay samples, average quality results CANNOT be used to make recommendations on what or how much to supplement. To make this type of recommendation, you will need to sample individual hay lots (one cutting from one field) that you will be feeding (see AGR-257 Hay Sampling Strategies for Getting a Good Sample). Once you have the results in hand, then a supplementation strategy can be designed by either working your local extension agent, nutritionist or veterinarian or by using the UK Beef Cow Forage Supplementation Tool (<http://forage-supplement-tool.ca.uky.edu/>). Steps for utilizing UK Beef Cow Forage Supplement Tool found at <http://forage-supplement-tool.ca.uky.edu/>.

Source: UK Forage News

Hay Testing is available through the Estill County Extension Office. Call our office or stop by to learn more.



Draw them in with fragrance

Source: Richard Durham, extension professor, Department of Horticulture

One of the most compelling aspects of a well-designed garden is easy to overlook on paper, and that is fragrance. From heady aromas to light scents, a fragrance carried on the breeze can lure people deeper into your garden to enjoy its beauty.

Flowers and herbs both can provide a lovely bouquet. Plant them along paths or near open windows, by your patio or in containers on your deck. In late spring, the sweet bay magnolia blooms release an evening perfume that, when near a window, can waft gently through your house.

Planting in clumps will give you the best fragrance. Spread your scented plants throughout your yard, nestling them into crooks and crannies where visitors can follow their noses to find the source of a particular aroma.

Some plants, like mint, release their scent when brushed against, so place those where folks pass close by. The summer-blooming perennial agastache, also known as hyssop, is a member of the mint family. Both its purple flower spikes and its leaves release an anise-flavored aroma.

Rosemary is also a member of the mint family. The shrubby herb can be used in cooking or just enjoyed for its woody scent in a container on the deck or mingled with other plantings in the garden.

Originating in the Mediterranean region, it prefers hot, dry weather and is only marginally hardy in Kentucky. If you want to guarantee its survival through the winter, it may be best to pot it up and move it to a sheltered but sunny area like

an unheated sunroom. For a light, grassy scent, plant chamomile. The herb's pretty, daisy-like flowers and its relaxing fragrance are an easy plant to add to either the flower or the herb garden.

Varieties of the annual nicotiana, known as flowering tobacco and sometimes jasmine tobacco, have a heavy, sweet scent that is strongest in the evening. If you're planting for fragrance, plant the taller varieties. Phlox paniculata or garden phlox has a potent scent on warm days. It's best to buy these in bloom, so you can test their aroma. Many hybrids have had the scent bred out of them in exchange for larger flowers and enhanced disease resistance.

The sweet fragrance of yellow honeysuckle can bring back memories of summer days spent in the yard. Look for native varieties, like yellow or Scentsation, that can trail over archways or walls, rather than the invasive shrub varieties.

If you don't plan on harvesting your thyme for cooking, consider planting it as a groundcover. When you walk on it, it releases the appealing scent of, well, thyme. You will find many uses for lavender in your garden. English lavender is prized for its calming scent, as well as its edible flowers, which can be dried and used in teas, cakes and cookies. Lavenders require well drained soil. Adding compost or other organic matter to the soil is beneficial. For more information about gardening for fragrance, contact the Estill County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

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For more Plate it up recipes visit
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/plate-it-kentucky-proud>

Triple Berry Crisp

- 3 tablespoons white sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/4 cup fresh blackberries
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 1/4 cup fresh blueberries
- 1/2 cup oats
- 1 1/4 cup fresh strawberries
- Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Spray the bottom and sides of an 8-by-8 inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. **Wash** berries. Do not let berries soak in water. Hull strawberries by removing the stems and green tops. **Place** blueberries, blackberries and strawberries in a mixing bowl. **Sprinkle** berries with white sugar and stir. **Set** aside. In a separate, large bowl, mix the brown sugar, flour, oats, cinnamon and nutmeg. **Cut** in the butter until crumbly.

Pour berry mixture into baking pan. **Sprinkle** crumbly mixture over the berries. **Bake** for 30 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

Yield: 12, 1/2 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 160 calories, 6 g fat, 3.5 g saturated fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 2 g protein



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.